

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-01

INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-15 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06 SP-02

CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15 STR-04

CEA-01 L-03 H-02 DODE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 ABF-01 AGR-10

AGRE-00 ITC-01 FEAE-00 INT-05 /118 W

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R 281138Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5422

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 28322

PASS TREASURY, FEDERAL RESERVE, COMMERCE

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN, FR

SUBJECT: SURVEY SHOWS MAJORITY OF FRENCH LACK
CONFIDENCE IN THE BARRE PLAN

A SURVEY CONDUCTED FOR "LE FIGARO" BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 23-25 REVEALS THAT ALTHOUGH A MAJORITY OF FRENCH WERE FAVORABLY IMPRESSED BY PRIME MINISTER BARRE'S PRESENTATION OF HIS ANTI-INFLATION PLAN ON SEPTEMBER 22, ONLY 32 PERCENT ESTIMATE THAT THE PLAN HAS MUCH CHANCE OF SUCCEEDING. BELOW ARE THE SURVEY'S QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES, SHOWN IN PERCENTAGE TERMS, AS REPORTED IN TODAY'S "LE FIGARO."

QUESTION: YOUR FIRST REACTION TO THE BARRE PLAN:

ON THE WHOLE FAVORABLE	39
ON THE WHOLE DISFAVORABLE	47
NO OPINION	14

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QUESTION: HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU IN MONSIEUR BARRE'S

ABILITY TO RESTORE THE FRENCH ECONOMIC SITUATION?

COMPLETELY CONFIDENT	8
CONFIDENT ENOUGH	34
LITTLE CONFIDENT	24
NOT AT ALL CONFIDENT	3L
NO OPINION	3

QUESTION: THE BARRE PLAN FORESEES A CERTAIN NUMBER OF MEASURES. DO YOU PERSONALLY APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE OF THE FOLLOWING:

	APPROVE	DISAP- PROVE	NO OPIN- ION
--	---------	-----------------	-----------------

PRICE INCREASE OF GASOLINE	26	70	4
PRICE INCREASE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES	67	22	11
INCREASES OF THE AUTOMOBILE TAX	26	67	7
INCREASES OF INCOME TAX IN 1976, AS A FUNCTION OF THE TAXPAYER'S INCOME	51	41	8
INCREASE OF ENTERPRISE TAX	79	14	7
POSSIBILITY OF PAYING THE TAX SUPPLEMENT THROUGH SUBSCRIBING TO THE GOVERNMENT DEBT ISSUE	46	30	24
INCREASE OF SOCIAL SECURITY FEES	14	80	6
SLOW-DOWN IN WAGE INCREASES IN 1977	30	65	5

QUESTION: DO YOU THINK THAT THE FOLLOWING MEASURES WILL BE EFFECTIVE OR NOT?

	EFFECTIVE	NOT EF- FECTION	NO O- PINION
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PRICE BLOCKAGE UNTIL DECEMBER 1, 1976	45	43	12
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DECREASE IN THE VALUE-ADDED TAX FOR A LARGE NUMBER OF PRODUCTS	69	19	12
BLOCKAGE OF PUBLIC TARIFFS UNTIL APRIL 1, 1976	64	25	11

QUESTION: IN TOTAL, WHAT DO YOU ESTIMATE ARE THE CHANCES OF SUCCESS OF THE BARRE PLAN?

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5423

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VERY LARGE	1
LARGE	31
WEAK	38
VERY WEAK	16
NO OPINION	14

QUESTION: MORE PRECISELY, WHAT DO YOU ESTIMATE ARE
THE CHANCES OF SUCCESS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST INFLATION ?

VERY LARGE	2
LARGE	28
WEAK	44
VERY WEAK	14
NO OPINION	12

QUESTION: WHAT DO YOU ESTIMATE ARE THE CHANCES OF
SUCCESS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT?

VERY LARGE --
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LARGE	9
WEAK	33
VERY WEAK	49
NO OPINION	9

QUESTION: DO YOU THINK THAT THE MEASURES HIT HARDER
THE LARGE INCOMES, THE SMALL INCOMES, OR BOTH EQUALLY?

LARGE INCOMES	24
SMALL INCOMES	34
BOTH EQUALLY	35
DOES NOT KNOW	7

QUESTION: ON THE WHOLE, HAS RAYMOND BARRE MADE A GOOD
OR BAD IMPRESSION ON YOU?

GOOD IMPRESSION	58
BAD IMPRESSION	20
NO OPINION	22

QUESTION: HAVE YOU FOUND MONSIEUR BARRE:

	YES	NO	DOES NOT KNOW
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CLEAR	77	20	3
SINCERE	55	27	18
AT EASE	66	28	6
CONVINCING	40	49	11

"LE FIGARO" IN ITS SUMMARY OF THE SURVEY RESULTS
SHOWED FOR SEVERAL QUESTIONS A PARTIAL BREAKDOWN
ACCORDING TO THE POLITICAL PARTY OF THE RESPONDENT.
DETAILS OF THIS BREAKDOWN WERE NOT INCLUDED IN THE
REPRINT OF THE SURVEY REPRODUCED ABOVE. ACCORDING
TO THE ARTICLE, ONLY 20 PERCENT OF THE POLITICAL
MAJORITY WERE NOT CONFIDENT IN BARRE'S ABILITY TO
CORRECT THE SITUATION WHILE 31 PERCENT OF THE MAJORITY
WERE SKEPTICAL CONCERNING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE
PLAN. THESE RESULTS LED "LE FIGARO" TO CONCLUDE THAT
THE POLITICAL MAJORITY GIVES MORE CREDIT TO RAYMOND
BARRE THAN TO THE PLAN WHICH HE SYMBOLIZES.
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THE ARTICLE ALSO STATED THAT SUCH MEASURES AS THE DECREASE IN THE VALUE-ADDED TAX AND THE BLOCKAGE OF PUBLIC TARIFFS WERE WELL RECEIVED, EVEN BY THE OPPOSITION. THUS, 45 PERCENT OF COMMUNIST VOTERS, 56 PERCENT OF SOCIALISTS, AND 90 PERCENT OF THE MAJORITY WERE IN FAVOR OF THE DECREASE IN THE VALUE-ADDED TAX. WITH REGARD TO THE BLOCKAGE OF PUBLIC TARIFFS, 56 PERCENT OF THE COMMUNISTS AND 47 PERCENT OF THE SOCIALISTS WERE IN FAVOR.

SURPRISINGLY, ONLY 16 PERCENT OF THE COMMUNISTS AND 30 PERCENT OF THE SOCIALISTS THOUGHT THE PRICE BLOCKAGE UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR WOULD HAVE SOME EFFECT AS COMPARED TO 77 PERCENT OF THE MAJORITY. "LE FIGARO" EXPLAINED THIS AS PERHAPS BEING DUE TO A FEAR THAT THE PRICE BLOCKAGE MAY ONLY BE AN ALIBI FOR SLOWING-DOWN THE INCREASE IN

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WAGES WHICH WAS DISAPPROVED OF BY 94 PERCENT OF THE COMMUNISTS, 90 PERCENT OF THE SOCIALISTS AND ONLY 35 PERCENT OF THE MAJORITY. ALSO SURPRISING IS THE FACT THAT A GREATER NUMBER OF COMMUNISTS (46 PERCENT AGAINST 44 PERCENT) AND SOCIALISTS (57 PERCENT AGAINST 39 PERCENT) DISAPPROVED OF THE TAX ON LARGE INCOMES THAN APPROVED OF IT. NO ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO EXPLAIN THIS APPARENT ANOMALY. SIXTY-ONE PERCENT OF THE MAJORITY APPROVED OF THIS TAX.

THERE WAS GENERAL HOSTILITY TO SUCH MEASURES AS THE INCREASES IN SOCIAL SECURITY FEES AND GASOLINE TAXES. NINETY PERCENT OF THE COMMUNISTS, 87 PERCENT OF THE SOCIALISTS AND 53 PERCENT OF THE MAJORITY WERE AAAINST THE INCREASE IN GASOLINE TAXES. THE INCREASE OF THE AUTOMOBILE TAX PROVOKED THE SAME ORDER OF REACTION. THE STRONGEST REACTION WAS PRODUCED BY THE INCREASE IN THE SOCIAL SECURITY CONTRIBUTIONS WHICH WAS OPPOSED BY 96 PERCENT OF THE COMMUNISTS, 89 UNCLASSIFIED

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PERCENT OF THE SOCIALISTS AND 72 PERCENT OF THE MAJORITY.

PRIME MINISTER BARRE HIMSELF WAS FAIRLY WELL RECEIVED BY ALL SIDES OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM. WHILE 38 PERCENT OF BOTH OPPOSITION GROUPS HAD A DISFAVORABLE IMPRESSION OF BARRE, 25 PERCENT OF THE COMMUNISTS AND 33 PERCENT OF THE SOCIALISTS HAD A FAVORABLE IMPRESSION, AND A LARGE PROPORTION -- 37 PERCENT OF THE COMMUNISTS AND 29 PERCENT OF THE SOCIALISTS -- CHOSE NOT TO EXPRESS ANY OPINION. NO BREAKDOWN WAS GIVEN FOR THE POLITICAL MAJORITY. HOWEVER, ONLY 10 PERCENT OF THE COMMUNISTS AND 23 PERCENT OF THE SOCIALISTS AS COMPARED TO 63 PERCENT OF THE MAJORITY THOUGHT THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WAS CONVINCING IN HIS PRESENTATION OF THE PLAN.
RUSH

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